

Appl. S.N.: 10/674,117

RD-29557-5

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**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

In the Office Action dated January 3, 2008, claims 1-9 and 18-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Robbins (US 3,089,325) in view of France '149 (France 2,594,149 ) or Japan '394 (Japan 2001-198394) or France et al (US 6,840,069). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

**Claim rejections under 35 USC §103(a)**

Independent Claim 1 is directed to an article cleaning apparatus and recites in pertinent part:

a fluid regeneration device including  
a cleaning fluid regeneration adsorption  
media that contains a portion of solvent  
based cleaning fluid to replace the solvent  
based cleaning fluid consumed.

The cited patent to Robbins relates to dry cleaning machines. The Examiner cited elements 60 and 61 of Robbins and the description in col. 6, lines 34-40 of that reference as a purported teaching of the above-described fluid regeneration device. After careful consideration of Robbins, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's conclusion.

There are substantial differences between the fluid regeneration device as recited in the instant claims and the apparatus of Robbins. Of special note: Robbins does not disclose or suggest a fluid regeneration device that includes a fluid regeneration adsorption media containing a portion of solvent based cleaning fluid to replace the solvent based cleaning fluid consumed. Element 60 of Robbins is a filter means that includes a plurality of elongated, tube shaped filter bags 61 (see Figure 5 and col. 5, lines 58-59). The bags are coated with a filter aid, to block passage of particulates, and an absorption agent, to absorb "fatty oils, dyes, and other impurities" (col. 6, lines 28-36). There is no mention or suggestion that the filter means contains a portion of cleaning fluid to replace

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fluid consumed during the wash/dry process. In fact, there is ample explicit evidence demonstrating that the filter means of Robbins merely cleans used fluid and continuously returns such fluid to a storage tank 10 for future use, without replacing any fluid that has been consumed. For example: "The pump means 11 constantly pumps the solvent from the storage tank 10 into and through the filter tank 50, into the first supply conduit 20 and the manifold 22...the solvent flows from the manifold 22 into each second supply conduit 25, into the return conduits 28, through the valves 32 and back into the storage tank 10" (col. 4, lines 56-63); "[A]ll solvent passing from one compartment to the other must pass through the filter bags 61" (col. 6, lines 9-11); "solvent is passing through the filter tank 50 [which houses filter means 60] at all times" (Id., lines 40-41). Nowhere in Robbins is there mention or suggestion that consumed fluid should be replaced by a portion of solvent contained in a fluid regeneration device.

None of the secondary references cited disclose or suggest this feature of independent amended claim 1. Further, Robbins does not teach or suggest the need for such a feature as it is solely concerned with the removal of impurities before the solvent is returned to a reservoir for use in a subsequent cleaning cycle, as noted above. Thus Robbins is not interested in replacing the solvent used but only in removing impurities from the solvent.

Independent claims 18 and 21 are believed to be allowable for the same reasons advanced as to independent amended claim 1. The rest of the claims depend from independent claims 1, 18, and 21, and are therefore believed to be allowable based on their dependencies from allowable claims.

Any additional fees for this amendment are hereby petitioned for, and the Director is authorized to charge such fees as may be required to Deposit Account 07-0868.

In view of the foregoing amendments and for the reasons set out above, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are

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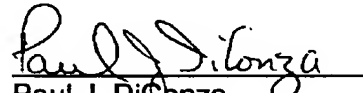
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respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is needed to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Thursday, April 03, 2008

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